ABERDEEN PHILATELIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER: September 2006

Once again, congratulations to our industrious Secretary for organising another excellent programme of meetings for the coming season, with a mix of visiting and local speakers, as well as society visits, auctions, a night when the President's philatelic secrets will be unmasked and evenings when everyone is invited to participate. The **opening night** on 21 September will take its customary informal format, with members invited to bring along boxes of duplicate stamps or covers so that everyone can have a good rummage. To raise the tone of the occasion, there will also be a silent display on the boards throughout the evening.

The Treasurer will be on hand to collect subscriptions which remain at £7 (or £2 for "country" members). The Treasurer asks members to make his life so much easier by bringing along the exact amount. Proffering a £10 note runs the risk of being interpreted as making a donation of £3 to Society funds!

Looking ahead to **alphabet night**, it seems that we are approaching the end of the alphabet when the letters are a little more testing, although the letter 'V' should allow for anything that can be presented as very interesting. Could a page of GB ½d reds of 1858 be presented as vertically challenged, I wonder.

The committee decided to continue last year's arrangements for the provision of **tea and coffee at our evening meetings**. Members will again be asked to volunteer to serve behind the counter on two successive evenings, but with one of the two people on duty standing down after each evening, so that there is always one person on duty who has done it before and knows where things are in the kitchen. The arrangement with the Church is that we provide any eats and all else is provided by the Church, with the proceeds shared. Members are asked not to take beverages near the display stands, to avoid accidents.

The Society welcomes 2 new members - one collects southeast Asia and the other collects both Czechoslovakia and USA. We wish them a long and enjoyable association with the Society.

Congratulations to one member and his co-author on the publication of *The Postal Markings of the Gambia*, a fine new handbook which has been entered in the Literature section of TORQUAY 2006, where we trust it will be received with acclaim by the judges. Whilst on the subject of publications, I am directed very firmly by the Secretary to make mention of the publication in *The London Philatelist* of work that I have been doing on the unusual circumstances surrounding the sales by auction in London in 1940 of some of the great collections of Agathon Fabergé.

The 2006 annual **Congress** of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies in Perth last April seems a long time ago by now but a brief note on the exhibits may still be of interest. There were thirteen entries in the National Competitions, which marks an upward trend. Standards are also rising in the Junior competition. The newly instituted Open Competition attracted seven entries including two from Aberdeen. Judging was by ballot of all attending the event but only 43 ballot papers were completed. The winner of this fun event was an entry entitled Bees. Next year's National Competition will be the last under the stewardship of the present National Exhibition Secretary. He looks to go out with a bumper entry so if you are considering submitting an entry, it will be very welcome. Further details and entry forms will be available from your ASPS Delegate in October. There is, incidentally, a suggestion that the classes in the National Competition should be extended to include a Cinderella class and I am asked to enquire whether there is anyone who might be tempted to submit an entry, if this class were to be introduced.

Centennial Celebrations: a call for volunteers. The Committee asks me to include the note which first appeared in the Newsletter for September 2004. Members have made various suggestions of appropriate special events which might be held in season 2009-10 (the Society came into being on 30 March 1910). The Society has agreed to host Scottish Congress in Perth in recognition of its centennial and this will involve organisation of displays, speakers, postal souvenirs, etc., a significant increase on the normal work load of the committee. The organisation of other, mostly local events will need additional support, if they are to happen. So far, the only other activities which have been agreed taken by members are the publication of both a history of the Society and of the posts in Aberdeen over the life of the Society. The committee would

therefore like to place the list of suggested events before the membership once again and to invite members to volunteer to organise one of these events. Whether or not they happen, will depend on the availability of volunteers willing to take responsibility for them. The list is as follows but in case there is something else not on the list which you would like to organise, please speak to the Secretary:

> A commemorative handstamp; a commemorative label; a centenary dinner; a public exhibition; a public lecture; a lapel badge and/or centenary tie/scarf.

Since 1950, it has become the established practice that the UK hosts an **international exhibition** every ten years. Reports in the philatelic press seem to indicate that controversy surrounds the planning of an event in 2010. Some months ago it was announced that a team consisting of Royal Mail, the Royal philatelic collections, the Postal Museum and Archives, the British Library, The Philatelic Traders' Society and the Association of British Philatelic Societies were planning what was described as a Festival of Stamps consisting of a number of linked events in London, all overlapping with a primary competitive exhibition at the Business Design Centre, Islington, the current venue of STAMPEX, from 8th to 15th May 2010. As I write, I have just seen a press report headed "Radical alternative proposed for London exhibition in 2010". The report describes plans for an alternative exhibition at Canary Wharf, London from 6th to 10th May 2010. The alternative format seems to be more of a trade event than exhibition focussed. Collectors wishing to exhibit will apparently be asked to send their entry beforehand in the form of a CD. Only those which are potential Grand Prix winners will be invited to London for final judging. We are promised more details of the alternative proposal shortly. They will probably be available by the time you read this Newsletter but what ever the outcome, a split of this magnitude is surely most unfortunate.

Autumn STAMPEX from 20 to 24 September still calls itself "The British National Stamp Exhibition", something of a misnomer without competitive exhibits. Perhaps that accolade is more appropriate for **TORQUAY 2006** on 24 and 25 November. The website lists all of the entries, including an entry into the InterFed competition from the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies. The event is organised by the Association of British Philatelic Societies and is held every two years in a different venue each time (remember GLASGOW 2000?). This means that a national competitive exhibition may only happen every second year, an unfortunate situation for UK philately. It has been suggested that ASPS host the event every intermediate year at Congress in Perth, where we have the facilities but I wonder if the idea will be seriously considered.

For coffee and philatelic conversation, don't forget the **informal meetings** every second Friday from 10am to noon at the Rubislaw Church Centre commencing 1 September.

On 19 March 2006, a new Society was formed called **The Scottish Philatelists' Club**. Its aim is to further the enjoyment of philatelists in Scotland by organizing social activities. It is not intended that the Club will carry out any formal philatelic activities; it exists for purely social reasons. The inaugural dinner will be held in the Dewar's Centre, Perth, on the evening of Saturday 21 October, that is on the same weekend as the two-day SCOTEX event in Perth. The annual subscription is £1, intended only to defray costs of circulating members. To join and receive further information about the dinner, contact the Newsletter Editor for details.

Thanks to much hard work and the expertise of one of our members, the Society has a **demonstration website**. If you have access to the internet please check it out at http://home.clara.net/simmich/abdnps/index.html and let the Secretary have your comments.

In December 1932, the Society held a month-long exhibition in the Art Gallery. The event was opened by the then MP for North Aberdeen, J G Burnett, and 250 invitation cards were printed for the ceremony. Have any of the cards survived? A copy is sought to illustrate the intended history of the Society. The Society does have an archive of press cuttings, photographs and other artifacts deriving from its illustrious past but it is inevitably far from complete and in case any member has items which could serve to illustrate events over the ninety-six years of the Society’s past, please do let Newsletter Editor know. For example, do you have any of the labels produced in several colours to publicise the ANSPEX public exhibition held in the Music Hall in 1950? Covers or other philatelic items which have a connection with the Society, or of some of the office bearers in the past, may also be of interest.